

The BULLETIN

Of The

Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association

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Bryan Barker, Editor

Do You Wish To Improve Your Publication?

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30th Annual Convention

Of The

**Columbia Scholastic
Press Association**

At

Columbia University

In

New York City

On

March 11, 12, and 13, 1954

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Are Poor Leads Killing Your Stories?

By Stuart P. Armstrong

The adviser of The Jackson Journal, Stonewall Jackson High School, Charleston, W. Va., one of the finest school newspapers in the country, writes of the importance of lead paragraphs. What is better still, he puts into practice in his own paper the ideas he here advocates.

Leads are the readers' invitations to read a story.

The headline attracts attention; the lead invites or repels. If the invitation is skillfully worded and is alluring enough the reader goes on to the "party," to the reading of the story. If the invitation is drably done and the "party" sounds dull, the reader is likely to refuse the invitation and attend another "party."

How can good leads be written? How can high school students be trained to use a variety of leads? Here are some suggestions that may help new advisers of school papers.

First, in my Journalism classes, we study (from text-books) different types of leads. Second, we study samples of these different types, by consulting school paper exchanges and seeing how the leads are used in actual practice. (Examples are cut from school papers to illustrate each type of lead. We make our own list of about 35 types). Third, we study the writing of leads. In this last case, students are given a reporter's set of notes gathered in collecting news for a story; then they try writing the most appropriate leads to be used for it, not the entire story, just the lead.

Surveys, actual practice, and a study of leads of both school and metropolitan papers, seem to indicate that the one-sentence lead is preferred by a majority of publications. A one-sentence lead must

realize that it is doing the work of several sentences and thus must be a more highly polished product than the rest of the story.

True, beginners tend either to crowd too much into such a lead or, fearful of doing just that, too little. What are the natural questions that a reader wants to know about the facts in the story? What are the facts? To answer them readily and in order of importance are two basic elements a reporter must understand.

It is easy to be arbitrary about the length of leads, but difficult and unnecessary to stick to a rule in all cases. "Use the number of words needed to tell the facts" is the foundation rule, but reporters like limits. To say that an average lead usually has thirty to forty words is a self-imposed limitation; some stories need more, some less. It is also obvious that it isn't always the *number* of words that counts; it's what the words *say* that's important.

After a student has tried writing a lead or two, he is asked to check the lead to see if it answers a reader's questions quickly. The first dozen words of the lead are the key words; if they are wasted, the reader may never get to the rest of the story.

Let's see some samples of the evolution of a lead. Here are three stages in the writing of a lead, as it was done first, then revised, and

finally published:

(1) It has just been announced that a special assembly will be held next week to honor Pan-American day here at school.

(2) The Spanish Club of school is planning to hold a special assembly next week to honor Pan-American day.

(4) Pan-American day will be celebrated next Tuesday, April 15, at an 8:35 a. m. assembly in the auditorium by a program called "La Fiesta," sponsored by La Terulia, Spanish Club.

In studying these three samples note that the first one wasted eight words before it got to the key-word, assembly. Notice, too, the absence of answers to a reader's normal questions of who, what, when, where, etc.

The second sample is certainly an improvement over the first. However, we train reporters to avoid the use of weak words for paragraph beginnings, and articles are among the weakest. Also, other questions about the assembly are unanswered.

Finally the third lead is not perfect, but at least it answers some questions and puts first things first.

Thus, practicing with news stories is the first big step a beginner takes in the writing of leads. Other types of leads seem easier after the news story.

Interview leads, for example, often begin with a striking statement. Below are some sample leads from interviews published in our school paper:

(1) "Success is due more to hard work than breaks," stated Miss Roberta Peters, Metropolitan opera star, who appeared here October 14 as the guest soloist of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra.

(2) "Anyone who would go into this profession would have to be a psycho about music," exclaimed

Hazel Scoot, noted concert pianist.

(3) "Freedom of the press is not a gift from God; it is a gift from the American people," stated James Street, newspaperman and author.

(4) "I love people!" So says Mrs. Ivy Priest, newly-approved treasurer of the United States, who spoke here last week at a Lincoln Day dinner.

(5) "If God calls you to be a preacher, don't stoop to be a king." (Eddie Martin, evangelist).

Interviews otherwise to avoid monotony, may begin as these two samples:

(1) Frank Paul Lo Vecchio, better known as Franklie Lane, Mr. Rhythm, has always sung and intends to keep on doing so.

(2) In Charleston for the purpose of speaking at the annual Lincoln Day rally here, Republican Senator and presidential aspirant Robert A. Taft of Ohio met the press Monday, February 1, at the club room of the Daniel Boone hotel.

Feature stories have a wide variety of leads possible, unorthodox ones having predominance. A few examples follow:

(1) Vacation time means fun time!

(2) Halloween means lots of fun now, but in early days it was one of the most dreaded nights of the year.

(3) "Jane, what are you going to wear to the dance Saturday night?"

(4) Next to the wedding ring and perhaps a class ring, the ring most girls would like to have most is a birthstone ring.

(5) Quick Henry — the penicillin!

Here comes that flu bug again.

(6) Have you ever spent a day in the dean's office

(7) Pandemonium.

Sports story writers apparently

have developed lead types all their own, although the majority favors the conventional summary lead.

(1) Stonewall Jackson finally got the "Old Elk Bucket" back last Saturday as they downed a game Charleston high Mountain Lion combine, 14-7, at Laidley Field.

(2) Breaking six records and scoring 99½ points to second place Charleston's total of 46, the Stonewall thinclads ran away from the rest of the field last Friday in their own Invitational track meet.

(3) Coach Pud Hutson's Stonewall Generals climaxed their '52 basketball campaign with a resounding 80-68 victory over the Red Dragons of St. Albans Tuesday night on the SJ court.

One good class project in a

study of leads is to choose well-written leads from school and professional papers, give the facts in assorted order to the students, and let them write their own leads. Special recognition can always be given those who write the same lead that was printed, or a better one. By having some of these leads worked out on the blackboard, a class may profit by the discussion that follows.

Good leads cannot make a poor story good, but poor leads certainly kill a story. Any adviser who polls the reading-appeal of stories in his newspaper can attest to that fact.

Let's brighten our leads. Let's take the reader by the hand and guide him into the story proper. How long he stays there is up to the reporter.

You Can't Buy Freedom At A Bargain Counter!

By Mary E. Murray

A former president of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association, a former editor of this publication, and active adviser of the Alcohol Mirror of Allegany High School, Cumberland, Md., comments on the Citizenship Conference held in Washington, D. C., this past fall.

"To be or not to be, that is the question."—Shakespeare.

"The strength of the Constitution is not in the written instrument, nor in the laws which have been enacted to carry it into effect, but in the minds and the hearts of the people of this country," stated the Honorable John J. Parker, Judge, United States Circuit Court of Appeals, in the keynote address to the 1,200 delegates attending the Eighth Annual National Conference on Citizenship at the Statler Hotel, Washington, D. C., last September.

Comparing the Constitution to a symphonic score, the Judge pointed out that the music of a

symphony is not in the written score but in the ability of the musicians to understand what is there written and interpret it upon their instruments. So, too, freedom under our Constitution depends upon its principles being understood by our people and being applied by them in their several communities.

Throughout the three day convention, the general and group meetings centered around the theme, "What Price Freedom?" Whether this nation will endure or collapse depends upon its people understanding, first, what freedom means; second, how it can be preserved; and third, how much value

they wish to attach to it.

Bryan Barker, editor of the CSPAA Bulletin, and I, representing the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, understood well the spirit of Patrick Henry in the Virginia legislature, George Washington at Valley Forge, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt at the outbreak of World War II as we, in friendly but heated arguments, discussed in our respective groups the extent of America's present rendezvous with destiny.

Perhaps our price tag on freedom was much higher after we witnessed the naturalization of the 47 aliens from nine different countries in court ceremonies presided over by the Honorable Luther W. Youngdahl, Judge, United State District Court for the District of Columbia.

During the administering of the oath, a stillness permeated the atmosphere. For those of American birth, it was a moment of quiet thanksgiving for this priceless heritage; for those who had suffered under the dictator's heel, or had fled from the Red shadow of communism, it was a blessing from above—an answer to deep and fervent prayer.

Following the naturalization proceedings, Miss Nancy Watkins, fellowship winner of Rotary International, extended a welcome to the new citizens in which she emphasized the fact that natural born Americans seldom stop to reflect upon this gift "given unasked."

"The deep and often wordless love we feel for our country has always been a part of our being," she said. "Your presence here today testifies that this love is shared. We have perfect faith that the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship are tasks you will assume."

In response, Miss Miriam Werth, a member of the naturalization

class and a former citizen of Austria summed up the sentiments of the 47 new citizens in her brief but sincere words, "We all hope to make this country proud of us and with the help of God, I hope that we will all be good citizens of the United States of America."

The Honorable Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General of the United States, and Dr. William A. Early, President of the National Education Association, congratulated the new citizens in the name of the convention's co-sponsoring organizations, the Department of Justice and the NEA.

The setting of the afternoon's program was the Sylvan Theatre of the Washington Monument Grounds. Highlighting the Constitution Day program was the review of the troops from Fort Belvoir, Virginia, the address by the Attorney General, and the wreath-laying pageant. The latter was a colorful ceremony in which the Governors of the thirteen original states, or their representatives, in the order in which their States had ratified the constitution placed a wreath of the States' flowers at the base of the Monument.

At the impressive banquet in the Presidential Room of the Statler that evening, Judge Parker set the stage for the discussion groups in his address, "What Price Freedom?"

Citing "work, vigilance, endless effort, self denial and sacrifice" as the American formula for progress, he raised two questions, "Think you that America has come out of the greatest war in history with its strength unimpaired and with wealth and power such as no other nation has ever possessed? Think you that they were given us for our own selfish use and enjoyment?"

His answer set the keynote of

the convention.

"I would be ashamed to think so. They were given us in the Providence of Almighty God that we might use them for the preservation of God's greatest gift to man, the gift of human freedom."

With this statement as the core idea of the convention, groups of twenty or more persons met for discussion. These meetings contributed highly to the success of the convention because they afforded opportunity for questions, argument, and debate. At the conclusion of each two hour session, the leader of the group made a summary report to Dr. William S. Vincent, Executive Officer, Citizenship Education Project, Columbia University. He made the final "Report To You From You" at the Saturday luncheon.

Youth night provided rich food for thought for all when the national winners of the "I Speak for Democracy" and the American Legion oratorical contests delivered their speeches.

"Satellite Justice on Trial" was the theme of the concluding address by the Attorney General of the United States.

"It has become clear that the Communist Party in the United States seeks to overthrow our government by force and violence," Brownell said. "The Communists know that they can be successful in their effort only if they break down the confidence of the people in our government and leave it weak and helpless in the face of a coup."

The Attorney General pointed out that high on their list of objectives is a program designed to instill in American citizens contempt for the judicial process.

"They know that our court system which is fair and impartial is one of the strongest bulwarks of

democracy. Consequently, they have used every device available in an attempt to turn our judicial process into a 'three-ring circus' in order to bring it into disrepute."

Many Americans are unwillingly helping the Communist cause by their criticism of the Rosenberg trial and that of the 11 Communists in New York because the trials were permitted to last so long. They feel that convictions such as Judith Coplon's, were reversed on mere "technicalities."

"Citizenship in a democracy imposes upon each one of us heavy responsibilities," stressed Brownell. "This includes the obligation to be informed of the reasons why we insist on the safeguards we accord to individuals accused of crimes, even to those who would abuse them.

"The Communists hope that by the illegal and unjust tactics they follow in their trials, they will make us so impatient with our procedural safeguards that we will abandon them. They are counting on this. We must be alert to their purpose, for if in our effort to combat Communism we adopt their illegal methods, we will lose those civil liberties which are the hallmarks of our democracy."

In conclusion, Brownell summed up his thoughts in this statement: "I can say only three things about the Communist system—it is swift, it is certain — and we want no part of it."

How true and how terrifying. And more important still is the warning of President Eisenhower, who said, "You can't buy freedom at a bargain counter. There is no labor, no tax, no service too hard to bear to support defense of our freedom." The price is high — yes, for some, even life itself.

"To be or not to be?" The answer depends upon YOU!

The Mercersburg News Headline Copy Sheet

(Name of type used: Bernhard Gothic Medium)

Size of type point.	Kind of type	Width of column ems.
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1. Print **boldly**, clearly, and **blackly** with a soft pencil.
2. Each word begins with a capital letter followed by small letters.
3. A verb in the top line is desirable.
4. Use infinitive, present, or future tenses; past tense to be used only of events dated in past time.
5. Ordinarily do not use *A*, *An*, and *The* and parts of the verb "to be."
6. Do not divide words at the end of the line or end such with a conjunction or preposition.
7. This paper always uses figures in headlines, not numerals spelled out.
8. The News follows its own policy of not using a student's name in a headline.
9. Headline material is usually found in the lead; if not there may be something wrong with that lead.
10. Do not write in a headline what is not in the article.

[illegible]

Count 2 units for each capital G, M, O, W.

Count $1\frac{1}{2}$ units for each small m and w.

Count one half unit for each i, j, l, period, comma, semi-colon, single quote, apostrophe.

Printed February, 1952

Got Headline 'Gaposis'?

By The Editor

Are the headlines in your school paper suffering from "gaposis"? Or are they supposedly counted correctly before they go to the printer, and then he, wretched fellow, finds they are too short or too long? No matter which side is at fault, both parties are annoyed; the one because the headline has to be altered or rewritten, and the other because it has to be set again. Your students may say to you, "Doesn't the printer know his job?" The printer may comment, "Don't you teach your kids how to write correct headlines?"

Because this writer once had the above annoyance, as well as other difficulties, in the headline department of the weekly, six-page paper of which he is the editorial adviser, he gradually evolved the headline copy sheet illustrated in reduced form on the opposite page. The sheet now in daily use measures 8½ inches by 11 inches and is printed on mimeograph paper.

The other difficulties had to do with capitalization, verbs and their tenses, the use of articles and parts of the verb "to be," figures or numerals spelled out, proper names, division of words, etc., the association, usually, of the headline with the lead, the proper count for punctuation and other marks and certain capital and small letters.

Not only was this adviser wanting a headline copy sheet where the headline would be automatically counted as it was written, but he wished that sheet to have on it some essential information which would aid in the creation of an acceptable headline.

Two other factors helped to bring into being this aid to headline writing:

1. A speed consideration. The copy for The Mercersburg News, a weekly six-page paper in a boys' private secondary school of 420 students, has to be handed in on Sunday night after supper and be at the printers by 8 a. m. next day, Monday. Newspaper work at Mercersburg is wholly an extra-curricular activity, there being no journalism course. Each article, too, has to be typed and by the boy assigned to do that article.

2. Each writer of an article is required to write the headline previously planned for his article. As headline material for one deck heads is usually found in the lead paragraph — the most important part of any article, surely — the writer of the article really tests himself on that lead when he comes to put together a headline for his article. If he wants to put some essential fact in that headline which is not in the lead paragraph, or even the article, then some revision of that lead or that article is necessary. As the headline sheet contains some essential information on headline writing, that sheet is of immense help to each person who has to write a head.

Such a headline sheet as the one opposite cannot be used to full effect without a headline schedule. That headline schedule should have on it good examples of each headline used in the paper, the minimum and maximum count required for each (such as "13-15"), the column width necessary for each (such as "13 ems"), the depth of each head (for dummy planning purposes), and the kind of type needed for the printer to make that headline (such as "black" or "italics").

The Mercersburg News uses 26 different sizes and kinds of headlines, all flush-left style, all upper and lower case. All of them are on the several headline schedules easily available in the publications room at Mercersburg. All of these headlines, except two 8-point bold, all-cap ones set on the linotype, make use of Bernhard Gothic Medium type, black and italics, and are hand set.

If an adviser wants to use a headline sheet similar to the one illus-

trated, he should adapt it to his particular requirements. Several alterations may be necessary before a workable one is evolved. A little money can be saved by having them done on the mimeograph.

Considering the pros and cons of this headline sheet illustrated and commented on here, someone may ask, "Has it been helpful and worthwhile?" This writer can answer this question with a firm "Yes!"

The Yearbook Portrait

By Claude T. Burns

Instructor in Journalism and Photography

Memorial Junior High School, San Diego, California

Yearbook advisers will be interested in the following article from the author's 40-page manuscript, "The Student Photographer." Further excerpts, each on other aspects of student photography, will appear in later issues of The Bulletin. All the photographs, camera, and laboratory work involved in the 1951 and 1952 yearbooks of his school were, he writes, 100 per cent the work of "14 and 15 year old 9th graders working for the most part without direct teacher supervision."

The formal portrait for school use is a compromise between the reaction news picture and the character study. Let's consider an illustration of both in order to make clear what the portrait is not.

The exchange of gavels from the old to the new student body president is either a reaction picture or a little stale history. Most school officers are expressive and their interesting personalities are obvious. That is one qualification for becoming an officer. At some point in the installation ceremony there will be a peak in the new president's reaction to the passing over of leadership to him. The alert, knowing photog shoots this peak of expression and also the other person to whom the new principal character reacts.

Briefly, the reaction news photo

says, "This is the way subject A reacted to stimulus B." Something of B must show here or in a matching picture to make sense. If, in the gavel exchange picture, A does not react expressively or you miss the peak and shoot a dead pan expression, the readers of your paper or viewers of your bulletin board are likely to comment to themselves or each other, "Why show us this? We saw it and we know all about it." But if your picture is a true reaction photograph your viewers will think or say, "How fine!"

The formal portrait is also a reaction picture, but the reaction is to the photographer and the less the picture says about him the better.

The portrait is a picture with a secret. It might say, "That photog was a darn clever character to get

me to *look alive* without telling me to do much of anything." But instead it stretches the letter of the truth a little to say, "I am especially awake when I look at you and the light in my eyes is for you, my friend, forever and ever." Every future owner of the yearbook you are helping to prepare wants to feel that every portrait shows this reaction to him, and because he wants to feel that way your job is not too difficult if you know what it really is and take it seriously.

If you tell a subject sitting for you to do or say anything, you are taking an action picture; and a portrait as such is silly and makes your subject look silly. It's a darn stupid photog who can't get a subject's mouth open without telling him to say *cheese*.

It is difficult to make pictures lie. A portrait is not supposed to be an action picture, and if you are so inexpert as to need to photograph a subject's obedience to your directions the picture will almost certainly say, "I am trying to cooperate with the photographer, but it's very hard and I am very self-conscious."

From the moment a subject enters your studio the job of you or your assistant is to get his mind off the subject of photography. Your future readers want to see this student as he or she reacts to people — not to cameras, or lights, or the bench to be sat on, or a strange room, or the business of being photographed.

So, let's assume you know something about photography. You don't have to prove it by any officious or pretentious manipulation of photographic equipment. You are now, more than anything else, a psychologist; but if you're a good one, your subject won't think of that either. You are just a good

14-YEAR-OLD BOYS TAKE 25 PICTURES FOR MAGAZINE

"Tumbling Illustrated" is the title of an article by Claude Burns, the author of pages 8, 9, and 10 in this publication, in the October 1953 issue of "Scholastic Coach." Two further parts on this athletic activity are to appear in later issues of this monthly magazine for athletic coaches.

How to tumble is described in careful detail by Mr. Burns. His article is illustrated on two pages by a series of 25 pictures which were taken and finished, the author says, by two 14-year-old boys from his school in San Diego, California.

friend and another student: keep your subject reacting to you as a person. Watch for the peak reaction and shoot it fast. You don't get second chances on sincere expressions; the subject can't repeat. Shoot several expressions if you have the time and the film; but none lost can ever be exactly duplicated.

The contact switch for your flash — or any 1/25 or faster exposure — can be of any shape and in many possible places: under your foot, under a table top, or somewhere on the tripod. The physical arrangement of your studio may easily be such that a subject never knows when you are going to shoot until it is over.

Your subject will react to you rather than to your apparatus only if you can prove to be such an interesting person that you become more important than your equipment. If you can bring yourself to feel, at least for this brief occasion, that each subject is important to you as a person, and you can be sincerely interested in him or her,

the reaction you wish will be quite automatic. Sincerity will get you further than trickery.

If you were to meet another interesting boy or girl outside of the studio you would find something to talk about. The studio is not necessarily so different from a shady lane on the campus or a counter seat in the corner drug store. Try to respect your subjects, like them, and talk *with* them — about anything but photography.

The character study is essentially a concentration picture. The subject is not important as a friend, but as an extraordinary person. If he reacts it is to his own special interests — those which make him an important or interesting person. Props may be good, but not so interesting or apart that they draw attention away from the person. If his special interests are people, he reacts — in your study of him — to what he thinks about people, or a symbol, such as a book or an instrument through which he expresses himself to people. If he does anything while being photographed, the concentration, not the action, is important. The action should not, therefore, be too interesting or tell too complete a story.

Your formal portrait is never a study of concentration. Don't try too hard to make your naturally serious students smile broadly, but you must — at least — get them mentally relaxed. Your formal portrait should say, "Billy was a good kid." It should never say, "What a brain!" Your character study may very well say, "What a brain!" or miss the point altogether.

Your yearbook portraits are each of one student among many. Don't bear down with all the sharpness, all the contrast, and all the fine detail of which you as a photographer are capable. Make everyone clearly

defined and photographically strong — remember that your printer will lose some detail and some contrast. But let each page say, "Each of these is one among many."

Every character study must say, "This person is one apart from many. This person is different." To accomplish this you need the sharpest definition, the finest detail, and the highest contrast without loss of detail in the highlights. As a photographer you can really "go to town." Viewers of this type of pictures can't escape the afterthought, "What a photographer!"

Obviously, you can't print these powerfully strong pictures across the page from pictures of normal tone and contrast. One method of placement is to use them as sectional title pages. Examples are: A full page of your concert violinist to head the fine arts section, and your most outstanding athlete to introduce your sports section.

LAMBERT GREENAWALT MADE A LIFE MEMBER OF CSPAA

That veritable stalwart of high school journalistic activity, Mr. Lambert Greenawalt, once described as "one of the founding fathers" of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, has been given Life Membership in the CSP Advisers Association.

Now retired from his long and very active career at the William Penn Senior High School at York, Pa., Mr. Greenawalt has edited and contributed to not a few publications put out by CSPAA, published two books on student journalism, been chairman of this committee or that group, and served on the CSPAA Advisory Board and other large and small bodies where accomplishing something had to be the end result.

Why Not Better Mimeograph Publications?

By Earl C. Whitbeck

The chairman of the Duplicated Publication Division of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association contributes some practical hints on turning out better mimeograph publications.

As we take a survey of the scholastic journalistic highway, the multitude of vehicles is amazing and often disconcerting. They're all there, from the custom made job to the old jalopy. Some are overdecorated with all the gadgets in the field. Some are neat and trim, and an occasional one gives a burst of speed showing that some expert has tinkered with the motor. Why do some bump along unevenly while others purr along smoothly? Why are a few stalled by the wayside? Well, it depends to a great extent upon the driver. If he keeps his vehicle in good repair, if he is particular about details, if he looks ahead and knows where he is going, the chances are that troubles will be of a minor nature. There are all types on this highway. Let's face it, ours are in the lower price field.

To be a successful driver of a low priced vehicle you must have, first of all, the correct mental attitude. Too many are apologetic: "Of course, ours is only a mimeograph paper"; "we are just waiting until we can get a printed magazine." Others are overawed by the sight of the higher priced job, a bit of letter press on glossy stock. They reach for it joyously and, without reading a paragraph, exclaim, "What a fine paper!" (Occasionally it is a good idea to lift the hood to see whether there is any engine beneath.) So if your mind is always on the higher priced, or perhaps even a custom built vehicle,

you aren't going to be content in the mimeograph field. Admiration, yes; appreciation, yes; subsurvience, no! If you have the correct mental attitude, you are happy with the type of publication you have, know its possibilities and its limitation, and then get out and do the best job you can. From the educational point of view, ours is one of the best types, for it can, and should, be 100% student work on the secondary level.

One outstanding weakness in many mimeograph publications is the appearance. Many schools send in contest entries that are dirty, smudged, even illegible. One adviser wrote on the entry blank: "We lost our contest entry and had to send in one of the student copies." What good it did the student is hard to understand. He could not have read half of it. There is little excuse for this sort of thing. If the stencil has not been typed properly, take the time to do it over. Those who run the mimeograph should stop often to examine pages to make sure they are legible. Run the mimeograph slowly. If the trouble lies within the mimeograph machine itself, call in your dealer. Ask him to be present while you are running your paper. When the print is legible, be sure you use slip sheets so that the pages will not blot or smudge.

When a publication of the above type is entered, there is often a notation on the entry form: "Our

mimeograph is so old we couldn't do any better work." This is still no excuse for illegible work. If you have been in production for several years and have followed the standard business practice of putting aside a reserve fund, get a new machine. If you have been improvident, go to your superintendent and board of education. You will find help here, if you have been doing a good job in public relations, in interpreting the school to the public. A refusal from this source should make you stop and examine your publication with a critical eye. Another source of help is your P. T. A. If all of these fail, go out and earn the necessary cash yourself. Hold food sales, rent out staff members for after school work, or try one of the dozens of money making schemes that weekly cross the school adviser's desk.

There is another entry blank notation that occurs less frequently and yet often enough to make the radiator boil: "The English teacher refuses to give us any help with our paper"; "we get no aid from the art department." Unless the adviser of a mimeograph publication is a commercial expert, an English paragon, and an accomplished artist, she is going to need help in producing her publication. The ideal setup for this field is three advisers: English, art, typing. Each can contribute greatly to the success of the publication. Any teacher knows the powerful motivation of a newspaper or magazine; so, when a teacher refuses to make use of this motivation, it is more than likely a question of personalities — unless the publication has been so bad that no one wants his name associated with it. Perhaps the other advisers would like co-ownership. Perhaps occasionally

one of them would like to drive. As in the outside world, this is a time for leaders to work together, not a time for dictatorship. Be honest. Tell the other departments that you need their help to do a good job. Let them share the spotlight.

The problem of improving the elementary school duplicated publication is of slightly different nature — however, the comments on the old mimeograph still hold true here. There is still no excuse for illegibility or messy pages. The difficulty lies in getting a competent typist to do the stencils. If the office secretary can not do the job and you do not wish the expense of a professional commercial typist, get in touch with the high school commercial teacher. There might be a capable high school student who would type the stencils for a modest fee. Somewhere in your community there is someone who can do a good job for you. Just get rid of that old idea that you must get the stencils typed for nothing. Any cost here is a legitimate expense, and should be incorporated in your budget whether you are self supporting or whether the board of education meets the expense.

Mimeograph publications have come a long way since the first ones were entered in a Columbia Scholastic Press Association contest. There is no doubt of their value as a teaching aid or for enriching the curriculum for the better student. Let's make them even better. Let's cut down on the number stalled on the wayside by intelligent, businesslike approach. If, however, in spite of everything, you find yourself in need of a tow car, call C. S. P. A. There is twenty-four hour service.

Notes From The Editor's Desk

"The Advisory Board of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association." Once upon a time, to use a fairy tale beginning, this writer wondered who that august body was. Now that he himself is a member he no longer wonders. To come to the point, that body — not august, though — met at Columbia University in the office of the Director of the Association, Dr. Joseph M. Murphy, at Columbia University on October 17.

From 10:30 to 5, with a suitable time out for a tasty, pleasant lunch in the Men's Faculty Club, this group of 14, with Dr. Murphy presiding, transacted or passed on a thousand items of business. There were matters about the March 11 to 13 CSPA convention — with that happy, delicious luncheon at the Waldorf, of course — Gold Key nominations, various entry fees for various things, a cartoon contest, and a hundred other matters over which we "heard great arguments about it and about."

* * *

The subject of humor in school publications is a recurring topic of interest. This writer put in a CSPA booklet on the subject that "In its best form humor has a definite and honored place in school publications," and that classroom "boners" and witty remarks are probably the most neglected form of humor available for the student press."

However, a number of "boners" have been sent to him — presumably because he published some Canadian ones in the October issue of *The Bulletin* — that can only be understood, and perhaps vaguely at that, by someone acquainted with a local situation.

When the editor was a boy at

school in England, the story passed around that the Latin words, *pax in bello*, had been translated into English on a university examination paper as *freedom from indigestion*. To this writer such an illustration of classroom humor was then, and still is, delightful. In England at that school at that time every student understood, or would soon do so, such a "boner," for everyone had to take Latin.

No, "boners" and so forth should be such that they can be understood by the majority or not published.

* * *

Last Summer a student editor of a school newspaper, who was evidently present at a talk this writer gave at the 1953 CSPA convention, wrote to him as follows: "Your discussion on the 'Typical Medalist Paper' left me wondering why . . . has not been a Medalist" for the

THE BULLETIN

The Bulletin is devoted to the interests and problems of faculty advisers of school newspapers, yearbooks, and magazines.

It is published four times a year in May, October, January, and March by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, Columbia University, Box 11, Low Memorial Library, New York 27, N. Y. Subscription: \$1 per year.

The editor is Mr. Bryan Barker, active editorial faculty adviser of a weekly, six-page paper, *The Mercersburg News*, *The Mercersburg Academy*, Mercersburg, Penna.

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past two years. "We know there is something wrong, but can't seem to lay your fingers on it."

The writer has heard this comment a number of times. The paper referred to above had over 100 entries in its particular classification. But student editors and advisers should also bear in mind that medalist rank is awarded publications especially selected from the First-Place group for outstanding qualities. Such a rating, however, is accorded to *not more than* ten per cent of all the entries in the class concerned. In the contest, each paper is compared with the others in its own particular classification and is rated according to its *relative standing* with reference to the other entries in its class.

* * *

In the October number of this publication the editor had an article entitled "Interviews Can Add Vitality To A Newspaper Or Magazine." That article was put in this publication by request.

But there was an aspect of the interview which the editor failed to mention. If a speaker, renowned or otherwise, addresses the whole school, does any student, or teacher for that matter, want to read an account of that speaker's talk in the school paper or magazine? This writer doesn't think so. Why not, then, interview such an individual and get his opinions on some different topic or topics. An article of that type in a newspaper will, if well written, be fresh and vital and at the same time put on record that So-And-So spoke in assembly. If it is possible to have a prewrite on the forthcoming speaker's visit—a prewrite which should be biographical in nature—as well as an interview, the fresh-news aspect of the newspaper will be further enhanced.

Only a capable stenographer can report a talk with anything like accuracy. And accuracy, be it remembered, is, or should be, the journalist's chief stock-in-trade. The amateur journalist will stand a much better chance at being accurate when writing up an interview than he will a quick-spoken address.

One can, of course, write editorial appreciation or criticism of an address. But surely there can be nothing more dull in a school newspaper than a straight report of some talk which all the readers of that newspaper have already heard and perhaps were compelled to hear.

* * *

November 20 and 21 saw the editor and two other advisers—Miss Corinne Cowgell of Hagerstown, Md., and Mr. Benjamin Alnutt of Bethesda, Md.—at Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pa., for the purpose of screening school newspaper editorials submitted in a

KIPLING WROTE APT JINGLE ABOUT LEAD PARAGRAPHS

Advisers often have considerable difficulty in getting students to write a good lead paragraph to a straight news article.

Rudyard Kipling was once a journalist in his young days in India, and put together a jingle which listed the essential things needed to write a good lead. Here is the jingle:

"I have six honest serving men;
They taught me all I knew;
Their names are Where and
What and When
And How and Why and
Who."

Some adviser, not knowing of this jingle, might be glad to pass it on to members of his staff as an aid to the memory.

competition and putting them into A, B, and C categories. The final winners of the fifty \$100 awards — which the above screeners did, and do, not select — will be announced on February 22 at Valley Forge.

The competition entry forms put out by Freedoms Foundation stated that the editorials submitted should "stimulate activation of the fundamentals of the Credo" of the American Way of Life reproduced on page 1 of that form. This Credo sets forth such things as the right to worship God in one's own way, the right to free speech and press, the right to assemble, and over a dozen other principles well-known to American people. This being so, why then did the three screeners have to read editorials, and often bad ones at that, on such topics as Better Grades, Courtesy, PTA, Homework, More Traffic Lights, Safe Driving, Budgeting Time, Throwing Trash Around, Teacher Shortage, and a dozen other topics so distinctly unrelated to the printed Credo of the American Way of Life as put out by Freedoms Foundation.

In a later Bulletin the editor hopes to run an article on the fundamentals of editorial writing, for there are too many advisers — for they were the people who chose and submitted the editorials in the Freedoms Foundation competition — who do not seem to know what an editorial is.

* * *

Criticism of something wrong even though that criticism be overstated or misstated, still has in it the elements of justifiable criticism.

A story comes to hand about a coach who took to task, with some justification, the student sports editor of a school paper for the way the soccer games were being reported. Said the coach in so many

words: I don't mind what you say in the paper about me or the team, but say it in correct English.

There are two things amiss here: the coach does mind what is said, and his wish for correct English is laudable though sometimes difficult to carry out.

What adult person, let alone an adolescent, can undertake always to write correct English? Winston Churchill? Yes — but what about the many galley-proof revisions he insists on and gets! What, too, would that soccer coach have said if that boy had countered with something like this: The paper doesn't mind what you say on the field, but do let us have correct soccer. What! correct soccer, French, history, algebra, manners, etc. from adolescents in a school where such things are supposed to be taught?

Yes, the coach had something to complain about, had a right to say

WOMEN AND MEN INVITED TO ATTEND MARCH 14 TEA

Woman advisers as well as men are invited to attend the Advisers Tea on Friday, March 14, at the Men's Faculty Club (400 West 117th Street) as guests of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association at this year's 30th annual convention of CSPA in New York City.

This tea, held from 3 to 5 p.m., is a very pleasant, informal, chatty, helpful affair to attend. Between these two hours people can go when they please and leave when they please.

In times past some women have thought that this tea was a smoky affair for men only. Nothing of the sort! Any adviser—whether nun, minister, man, or woman—can attend.

it, but he worded it wrongly.

To this writer it is almost axiomatic that no one likes criticism. But criticism has to be faced, or how would one become aware of error? Particularly does criticism become harder to bear when effort, time, and conscientiousness have been expended on the something criticisd, or lack of cooperation and other difficulties encountered.

* * *

How does the editor of The Bulletin select articles for the publication, someone once asked him. Well, he tries to pick them on the basis of what advisers need.

In 1948-1949 DeWitt D. Wise, chairman of the yearbook division of CSPA, conducted a survey

among advisers of newspapers, yearbooks, and magazines to see, among other things, what "phases of the work with school publications are giving you the greatest concern." He listed for checking 12 aspects of student journalistic activity. When the survey was tabulated it was found that journalism techniques, financing, photography, staff organization, and faculty cooperation were the top five problems in all three publications.

In the previous issues of this publication the editor has tried to supply material on newspaper and yearbook problems. He hopes in future numbers to deal with staff organization on two levels, high school and private school, and faculty cooperation.

CSPA Conventions Can Help You

(Reprinted from The Advisers Bulletin for March 1953)

Whether you are a new adviser to the student publication field, or whether you are an experienced one, a Columbia Scholastic Press Association convention can be very helpful to you in your work. This annual get-together of several thousand students from schools in all parts of this country will be held this year at Columbia University from March 11 to 13. Here are some ways in which it can be helpful to you:

1. The displays of newspapers, magazines, yearbooks, etc., in the rotunda of the Low Library will show you what other schools in your class are doing. Spend some time examining the publications in which you are interested, and then ask yourself if yours is better or worse than any on display and why.

2. By chatting over your problems with other advisers you can learn a lot. If there is trouble

among your student staff, if finances bother you, if you don't know, say, how to vary a news lead, or if a dozen other things, there will be some adviser, man or woman, with whom you can chat it over.

3. Select some clinic, some round table conference, etc., from the many listed in the program booklet and attend it to see what you can find out. Don't expect miracles; but there is always a better and sometimes a new way of doing things.

4. If you are fairly new in advising work, you may find it very helpful to have your publication criticized by an adviser a little more experienced than you are.

5. You will find the Advisers' Tea on Friday, March 14, from 3 to 5 in the Men's Faculty Club (400 West 117th Street) a very pleasant, informal, chatty, helpful affair to attend. And — it's on the house.

Guide To Good Books

By Hans Christian Adamson

Colonel, U. S. Air Force, retired. Author in the fields of aviation, astronomy, popular science, biography, history, transportation, nature, etc. The reviews appearing in this January, 1954, issue of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association Bulletin, published quarterly at Columbia University in the City of New York, are also distributed to four hundred United States Armed Services libraries in thirty-six Commands throughout the world. Readers please address all inquiries regarding "Guide To Good Books" to: Hans Christian Adamson, P. O. Box No. 67, Saratoga, California.

If the Mainstream of America Series, edited by Lewis Gannett, and launched by Doubleday, lives up to its first volume, it will be the major contribution to the study of the American Way which the publishers obviously intended it to be. Written by Stewart H. Holbrook and entitled *The Age of the Moguls* (Doubleday — \$5.00 — non-fic., ill.) the reader finds a series of crisply written close-ups of tycoons such as Rockefeller, Carnegie, Lawson, Ford, Mellon, Du Pont, Insull, and Vanderbilt who influenced the course of history. Some of the material is new, all of it is vital. Today, some of them are called Robber Barons. But tyrants or tycoons, they will forever leave their imprints on human affairs. *The Age of the Moguls* successfully strives to be an impartial mirror.

An unusual novel of the closing years of the Mountain Man, scalping Indian, and fur trader is *West of the River* (Atlantic, Little Brown — \$3.50 — fic.) by Charlton Laird. The author weaves a colorful pattern on solid factual fabric. Superior in every way to the run-of-the-mill western novel in that it gives a new slant of the last flickerings of the upper Mississippi

wilderness when the wicked became ultra-corrupt and the just grew barely strong enough to rise against them.

The oft-chronicled saga of Peter Freuchen, a hardy Nordic with a hearty appetite for Arctic adventure, rolls off the press once more in *Vagrant Viking* (Julian Messner — \$5.00 — non-fic.). Again we find the doughty Peter among Eskimos. He offers interesting detours into Scandinavia, Hollywood, and Russia. Friends of Mr. Freuchen will enjoy renewing their acquaintance. To those who have never before come upon him, *Vagrant Viking* will be a refreshing experience.

Addicts, permanent or temporary, to Mr. Thurber's rib-tickling products in words and pictures will greet his *Thurber Country* (Simon & Schuster — \$3.75 — fic.) with chuckles, shortles, snickers, smirks, and laughter. To credit a clever blurb-writer: "You will find *Thurber Country* a place not difficult to enter but hard to leave."

Life Is Worth Living (McGraw Hill — \$3.75 — non-fic.) by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen is indeed a faithful guide to a happier attitude toward our daily problems and their realis-

tic solution. The 26 chapters in this book are taken directly from tape recordings of the Bishop's widely-heard radio and television programs. On each page we find the vibrant and vital approach to pressing burdens that has lifted Bishop Sheen's air-sermons to unusual heights of public recognition.

Sasha Siemel is a naturalist who specializes in hard-to-claw combat with Jaguars. His only weapon is a homemade spear. In *Tigrero* (Prentice-Hall — \$3.95 — non-fic.) Mr. Siemel describes the Great Marshes of Brazil. He also introduces weird and salty characters that impart zest to an autobiography full of high octane adventure.

Barnaby Conrad, diplomat and bullfighter, is the author of *La Fiesta Brava* (Houghton Mifflin — \$5.00 — non-fic.), a bouncy and understanding discussion of the arts of the bull rings in Spain and Latin America. Starting off with a biographical sketch of the famous but late Manolete, Mr. Conrad describes the cast of characters in the bull ring, their costumes, weapons, and procedures — all so rigidly defined by tradition.

Better late than never is the word when it comes to my calling belated attention to *Exploration in Science* (Viking — \$3.50 — non-fic.) by Waldemar Kaempffert, dean of newspaper and periodical science writers and also the author of many books on science. In *Exploration in Science*, Mr. Kaempffert speculates on many intriguing subjects such as the harnessing of sun-power; man's control over weather; the ultimate defeat of cancer; and what will Future Man see when he looks into a mirror. Brilliantly written, with rare simplicity.

Crown Publishers are to be congratulated on their fine production

of *Wild Flowers of America* (\$10.00 — non-fic.). Captions and text were written by H. W. Rickett of the New York Botanical Garden. Most of the life-like paintings were executed by Mary Vaux Walcott with additional art by Dorothy Falcon Platt. More than 400 wild flowers are depicted in actual size and in beautiful true-to-nature shadings. Of value are a ready identification chart and an extensive glossary.

Until 1938, Alexander Orlov was Stalin's counter-intelligence chief. Then he discovered the blood-stained writing on the cellar wall and escaped to America. Since then, he has evaluated the criminal aspects of Stalin's regime and presents it convincingly in *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes* (Random House — \$4.50 — non-fic.). He pulls no punches in revealing how Stalin eliminated friends who lifted him to power.

One big thing regarding *The Truth About Big Time Football* (Wm. Sloane — \$3.50 — non-fic.) by Richard I. Miller, is that here, for the first time to my knowledge, broad and constructive attention is given to improvements to college football that could be accomplished under the new "Sanity Code" of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. A friendly criticism that goes beyond mere fault finding.

Ratoons by Daphne Rooke (Houghton Mifflin — \$2.00 — fic.) deals with violence among Whites, Indians, and Zulus in the diamond country of South Africa. Like her previous novels, this is a highly successful dissection of the triple distilled racial problems of the Cape Hope country.

Helen Worden Erskine, Star-Feature-Writer of New York's

World-Telegram, collects picturesque and unusual hermits. In *Out of This World* (Putnam — \$3.75 — non-fic.) she presents profiles of men and women who pursued unique and solitary paths because of their leanings toward hermitry. Over many years, Mrs. Erskine devoted a great deal of her time and talent to penetrating the retreats of voluntary hermits as well as the reasons for their solitude. The result is enjoyable reading.

On television, radio, motion pictures, and records, we have heard the masterly folk singing of Burl Ives. Now, he comes to us in a new format, namely, *The Burl Ives Song Book* (Ballantine — \$5.00 — non-fic.). It contains about a hundred of the hairy-chested songs that Burl Ives has made famous — or vice versa — complete with text, full piano part, and guitar chords. In bright anecdotes, Bearded Burl tells the story of some of the songs.

For years on end, King Vidor has been a star-director of motion picture stars, but he is not a has-been. Now he appears as the source of *A Tree Is A Tree* (Harcourt Brace — \$3.95 — non-fic.) — the autobiography of a man who created many super-stars in super-colossal pictures. Through intimate text and a lively lineup of photos, Mr. Vidor takes us all the way from the Birth of A Nation to the Dawn of 3-D.

Random House continues the fine flying start being made by its All About Everything Books. The newest of this series — which mainly deals with the wonders of nature and invention — is *All About Dinosaurs* (\$1.95 — non-fic.) by Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews. While slanted toward high school age readers, this volume offers dramatic entertainment and thought-provoking in-

formation for all readers of all ages.

Herbert V. Prochnow's *The Speaker's Treasury of Stories For All Occasions* (Prentice Hall — \$3.95 — non-fic.) is an outstanding exception to the average tome of fodder for post-prandial harranguers. It not only contains good anecdotes, some so new that even Jessel has not heard them, but also a wealth of well-indexed reference material covering national and world affairs.

In the absence this season of any Major Works of Vulgarism by unknown but not extinct soldiers, it could be that a soul-stirring book by an established writer might win the wide reading it deserves — *The Face of Time* (Vanguard — \$3.75 — fic.) by James T. Farrell. Here, again, Mr. Farrell reveals himself as a deep and vocal student of human beings. Young Danny O'Neill and his bewilderments are the book's focal points. But, in my opinion, Grandpa O'Flaherty is drawn with such unique realism of rebellious sunsetage that he "steals" the story. The author of *Studs Lonigan* at his scintillating best.

All deep sea anglers, and some fresh-water reel'n-rodders, will welcome Philip Wylie's newest collection of true tales of oceanic fishing, *Denizens of the Deep* (Rinehart — \$3.00 — non-fic.). Stories about marlin, shark, sailfish, barracuda, and other denizens of the sea told in the lively Wylie style.

The scenes and records of sports in national and international contests are given complete listings in *The Encyclopedia of Sports* (Barnes — \$10.00 — non-fic.) edited by Frank G. Menke. Users of sports reference books are already acquainted with previous editions of this volume. The current product is not only the largest but also boasts a

super-index.

The pulsing wave of nation-wide interest in things theatrical — as proven by dozen of road-companies and scores of little, round and straw-hat theatres in large and small communities — should carry *World Theatre In Pictures* (Greenberg — \$7.50 — non-fic.) clear across the country. Assembled by Tom Prideaux, Associate Editor of Life Magazine, this truly magnificent volume presents the story of the stage in picture form. Its curtain raises on the theatres of long-gone civilizations and falls on the scene of our current Great White Way. Excellent text for the pictures that fill this 256 page book.

It is impossible for two mortals, such as Dick Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, to write such immortal works and music without creating wide public interest in and curiosity about their ways of life and methods of work. That curiosity is competently anticipated by Deems Taylor in *Some Enchanted Evenings* (Harper — \$3.95 — non-fic.). To this job, the author brings unusual equipment. He is not only a personal friend of his subjects, but also one of America's leading drama writers and music critics. A lively, well-illustrated story which includes proper tribute to the late Lorenz Hart.

The two major and opposing schools of thought on the conquest of space are brilliantly discussed by Jonathan N. Leonard, Science Editor of Time in *Flight Into Space* (Random House — \$3.50 — non-fic.). Not overlooking *Across The Space Frontier* (Viking — \$3.95 — non-fic.), a fine symposium on space travel compiled by Cornelius Ryan, I feel that Mr. Leonard's volume supplements rather than overlaps Mr. Ryan's splendid effort. Here,

between two covers, the pros and cons are outlined, Einstein problems in every-day language.

For more than a quarter of a century, Eugene Lyons has maintained his position as one of the best informed and certainly most objective critics of the Red Soviets. In *Our Secret Allies* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce — \$3.50 — non-fic.), Mr. Lyons presents the unique idea that the Western World has strong allies among rank and file Russians. He sets out to prove his contention and succeeds magnificently. A real must.

The Female (Doubleday — \$3.95 — fic.) by Paul I. Wellman, is a highly readable treatment of historical facts. Here we meet Theodora of ancient Constantinople. She made the long journey from woman's oldest profession to woman's highest political place — Empress of the Roman Empire. As usual, Mr. Wellman's capacity to unearth interesting details adds sparkle to the historical action.

As colorful and dramatic as a top-notch novel is *The Alleys of Marrakesh* (Atlantic, Little Brown — \$3.75 — non-fic.) by Peter Mayne, an Englishman who has spent most of his adult life east of Suez. Mr. Mayne depicts the ways of the Moslem world behind forbidden walls. These, Mayne succeeded in circumventing as a dweller in the back streets of native Morocco. The friends and enemies the author made, the understanding and misunderstandings, blend into a book which, if nothing else, is a superior time killer.

All cat-lovers will enjoy *195 Cat Tales* (Farrar, Straus — \$3.50 — non-fic.). Edited by William Cole and illustrated by Sprod, the distinguished Punch artist. Amusing cartoons and mirth provoking text.

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CSPA Aids and Services To School Publications

Figures quoted in parentheses () are prices to NON-MEMBERS OF THE CSPA. Members are entitled to the lower rate. Orders should be accompanied by remittance.

Official Style Book, 20c (30c).

Proudfather's Cards, 5c, 6 for 25c.

School Newspaper Fundamentals, 50c (75c).

Yearbook Fundamentals, 50c (75c).

Humor in School Papers (NEW), 35c (50c).

Sports Writing for School Newspapers (NEW), 35c (50c).

School Magazine Fundamentals, 50c (75c).

Duplicated Publications Fundamentals (NEW), 50c (75c).

CSPA Electro (for printed publications), Members only, \$1.00.

CSPA Mimeo Inset, Members only, 15c.

CSPA Individual (Staff) Membership Pins (Adviser's permission required), \$1.20 (including Federal Tax).

CSPA Outstanding Service Medal (Special request form must be filled out by the Adviser—limited to one per staff per year), \$5.00 (including Federal Tax).

Critical Analysis—For newspapers and magazines, \$2.00; for yearbooks, \$2.50. (Not to be confused with Contest or Contest fees).

School Press Review, Monthly, October to May, \$2.00.

Available on writing:

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association

Box 11, Low Memorial Library, Columbia University,
New York 27, N. Y.

